



State of Arizona

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Governor Jan Brewer Deploys National Guard to Monument Fire

Deployment part of massive state, federal response to southern Arizona fire

PHOENIX – Acting in response to a request from Cochise County officials and local incident commanders, Governor Jan Brewer has deployed approximately 90 members of the Arizona National Guard to assist with operations in response to the Monument Fire near Sierra Vista.

The service members are part of the Tucson-based 860th Military Police Company. Beginning Tuesday, June 21, they will provide area security for locations evacuated due to the fire, and will be directed by local law enforcement. Additional Arizona National Guard forces are poised to deploy for additional assistance, if needed.

“The Monument Fire continues to draw a massive response from federal, state and local authorities,” said Governor Brewer. “I’ve deployed these National Guard members to assist with the effort, and won’t hesitate to authorize additional manpower if necessary.”

Meanwhile, the interagency staff at the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Phoenix continues to cautiously monitor and proactively plan for the consequences of the Monument Fire. The blaze, fanned by high winds and fueled by extreme heat and low humidity, has forced the evacuation of several communities and subdivisions. It is approximately 27,000 acres and almost 30 percent contained. Citizens with questions regarding the Monument Fire should call 800-288-3861.

The following is a summary of how state agencies are assisting with the response to the Monument Fire:

- The State Forestry Division’s request for a federal Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) was approved by FEMA on June 12. The FMAG will reimburse the state for 75 percent of firefighting and evacuation costs.

- The Arizona Division of Emergency Management has deployed liaisons to the Monument Fire to facilitate information sharing between the State Emergency Operations Center and Cochise County. A state communication vehicle was also dispatched to provide enhanced communication support in the area.
- The Arizona Department of Health Services is operating on several fronts for the Monument Fire. The Licensing Division is working to ensure that facilities and agencies have evacuation plans and know whom to contact if they are ordered to evacuate. So far, 15 facilities have relocated patients and residents, but there are 104 facilities within 20 miles of the fire line. Another major component of the DHS response is making sure that the facilities that remain open have enough staff. This is crucial since there are thousands of evacuees who may not be able to get to work, and some are part of the staff at hospitals, nursing homes and child care centers.

The DHS Behavioral Health Division is working closely with Cenpatico, the Regional Behavioral Health Authority in Cochise County, to make sure it has what it needs. So far, Cenpatico has mobilized countless counselors and psychiatrists to visit shelters. Cenpatico is also operating at 24-hour-a-day crisis phone line for people to call. Behavioral Health is one of the longest lasting impacts of any disaster.

The DHS Public Health Division is running the operation to make sure Health Services can provide needed services, and has provided a representative at the State Emergency Operations Center. The Environmental Health Office is helping with information for area shelters about food safety and health effects caused by the air quality near the wildfire. The Bureau of Nutrition and Physical Activity is actively reaching out to the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) clinics in the area to make sure they are safe and have what they need.

- People affected by the current wildfires who have questions or problems with their home, auto or health insurance can contact the Department of Insurance for assistance (800-325.2548), or visit www.azinsurance.gov for insurance tips and resources. Evacuees are encouraged to contact their insurance company or agent as soon as feasible.

Visit the Arizona Emergency Information Network (AzEIN) website at www.AzEIN.gov for real-time emergency updates, preparedness and hazard information, and multimedia resources.

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